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BOOK REVIEWS.

SECTIONALISM IN VIRGINIA FROM 1776 TO 1861, by Charles Henry Ambler, Ph. D. 349 pp. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

This book is one of the most important recently issued upon the history of Virginia, being an account of the politics of the Old Dominion from the Revolution to the Civil War and the secession of West Virginia, and supplies a greatly felt want. The Colonial and Revolutionary history of Virginia and the Civil War period have been treated by many writers, but the age extending from 1783 to 1861 has never received comprehensive treatment until the present time, when the task was undertaken by Dr. Ambler.

And he has done the work well—with extensive research and critical ability. Owing to the absence of books and monographs on the subject, it was necessary to read carefully through the files of newspapers for many years in order to gain a hold upon and follow out the twisted strands of political affairs. The marked social, racial and economic differences existing between old Virginia and the Virginia west of the mountains make possible a sectional consideration of politics for the whole period of the history of the State as a member of the federated republic. Dr. Ambler has done this work with care and in detail, beginning with an account of the differences existing between eastern and western Virginia at the time of the Revolution, and showing the development of the divergence under the influence of the various questions agitating the public mind, such as slavery, the tariff, internal improvements and education. The account of the convention of 1829-30 is very clear and satisfactory. On the whole the predominant east treated the west fairly, and the latter section, while always clamorous for reform, had few real grievances, as Dr. Ambler's book makes evident. The east bore by far the greater burden of taxation and the west received a more than equal share of the internal improvements carried on by the State. When it is considered that the slave property owned mostly in the east contributed about one-third of the total revenue, the eastern contention that such property should be represented seems very reasonable and the western demand for a representation based solely on the white population much less overwhelmingly convincing than it might appear on first sight. One of the most valuable features of the book is the account given of the rise and development of parties in Virginia, which now for the first time may be studied with a reference to their continuous activities.

Dr. Ambler maintains one theory, long held, which has somewhat yielded to the light of recent research. The Revolution was not a movement forced upon the reluctant Tidewater by the radical and progressive west. It had its genesis in the east, amongst the planters, who, more than the people of any other colony or section of a colony, possessed the intelligence and historical and constitutional knowledge required in order to perceive the dangers underlying the attitude of the English Government and to take up the proper line of resistance. The pioneer part played by eastern Virginia in the Revolution has been demonstrated by Dr. Tyler in a series of articles appearing in the *William and Mary College Quarterly*. The role enacted by western Virginia was not the creation of a movement but the precipitation of it. Patrick Henry was not the father of the Revolution but the heir of Richard Bland and his political executor.

H. J. ECKENRODE.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA. By Jennings C. Wise. Bell Book and Stationary Company, Richmond, Va.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia, including the counties of Accomac and Northampton, separated by the Chesapeake Bay from the rest of the State, has naturally had a history of its own—sometimes quite apart from that of the main portion of Virginia. This isolation, however, has not prevented its people from being the most loyal Virginians.

The situation of the Eastern Shore, its wealth of records (those of Northampton begin in 1632 and are the oldest county records in the State), the remarkable way in which its population has remained unchanged, and the many interesting events which happened within its borders, have all long called for a historian. The history here treated of, which is now in the press, will fully meet all requirements, and deserves unqualified commendation.

The author, Mr. Wise, is a member of a family long prominent in the section he writes of and though still a young man, has, as an officer of the United States Army, and now as a lawyer, a wide acquaintance with men and affairs. The writer can bear testimony to his indefatigable energy in the work of investigation. The distinguished historian, Mr. P. A. Bruce, who read the manuscript, says: "I have found your work to be * * * very interesting; not even the second reading was tedious. It contains a mass of most valuable material, which is, as a whole, very skilfully arranged. Your style, as a whole, is clear and vigorous. * * * In conclusion, I congratulate you most warmly on a most valuable, interesting and comprehensive piece of historical work."

The volume, now in the press, consists of an edition of 1,000 copies, with a price fixed for advance subscribers. It treats of Eastern Shore history during the seventeenth century, and will be followed, if there is